

THE POLITICAL ARENA

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"ADA Leader to Head Free Europe Setup"

By Fulton Lewis Jr.

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President Eisenhower's buddy from West Point cadet days, Lieutenant General Willis D. Crittenberger, retired, is on his way out as president of the Free Europe Committee, which operates the highly controversial propaganda mill known as Radio Free Europe.

After two years at the stormy helm, his contract expires as of January 1.

To those who have been stirred to uneasiness by the philanderings of Radio Free Europe in glorifying Yugoslavia's Tito and Poland's Gomulka, this may have a first blush of heartening news.

Unhappily, however, it is only a cruel mirage. The Free Europe board of directors has chosen, as his replacement, one Archibald Stevens Alexander, a wealthy New Jersey suburbanite, who has been dabbling in radical Democratic politics for some 10 years.

General Crittenberger's frailty stemmed from the fact that he is a man trained in the business of warfare, not international affairs, or radio, or news gathering, which are the talents the RFE job demands. His weakness, however, was negative, in that he just didn't know the job and the doctrinary mice at the operating level ran the show according to their peculiar caprices.

ADA Background

Mr. Alexander is no better equipped for the job. He is a retired lawyer, with no experience in any of the above mentioned lines, but he is far from negative, ideologically.

His record suggests, indeed, that under his tender tutelage, the Radio Free Europe "message of hope and freedom," so glamorously advertised to the public in the fund-raising appeals for "truth dollars," will in fact become the international propaganda voice of the Americans for Democratic Action.

Mr. Alexander is an old-time trusty of the ADA. In fact, as early as 1954, he became vice-chairman of the ADA in the state of New Jersey.

Later Governor Robert Meyner appointed him New Jersey State treasurer.

Governor Meyner, himself, is a favorite darling of the ADA as well as the AFL-CIO, and his administration is frankly loaded with ADA functionaries. It is worthy of note, therefore, that the New Jersey Democratic organization, which Governor Meyner controls as Khrushchev controls the Kremlin, saw fit to make Mr. Alexander the Democratic National Committeeman from New Jersey, partly in recognition of the fact that he was national chairman of the Citizens for Stevenson in 1956.

Adlai Lieutenant

This, it will be remembered, is the campaign in which Mr. Stevenson proposed that we stop all testing of nuclear weapons, whether Soviet Russia would agree to do so or not. Mr. Archibald Alexander supported him, nay promoted him.

Into these numble fingers then, is the Free Europe board of directors delivering the vast propaganda machine in Munich and Portugal -- the most powerful in the world.